(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) and (f) As per the agreement reached, both countries agreed to open their respective airspaces for overflights for th airlines of both countries. The designated airlines of both sides are now entitled to operate 5,3, and 4 services/week on Karachi-Mumbai, Karachi-Delhi and Lahore-Delhi v.v. routes respectively. The agreement helped both PIA and Indian Airlines to start operations between the two countries.

New International Airport at Ludhiana

3184. SHRI DHARAM PAL SABHARWAL:
SHRIMATI SUKHBUNS KAUR:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a proposal to have a Greenfield International Airport at Ludhiana;

(b) if so, what steps Government have taken to develop/upgrade certain infrastructure necessary for the Airport;

(c) whether any request has been received from the State Government of Punjab to allow International flights from Halwara Air Force Station; and

(d) the action taken by Government in this matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (d) There is a proposal from the State Government of Punjab to construct an international airport at Halwara airbase of Indian Air Force (IAF) near Ludhiana. The State Government has appointed a Consultant to conduct a pre-feasibility study of the project. Ministry of Defence has already conveyed their no objection to the proposal. Airports Authority of India (AAI) is likely to depute a team of officials for survey of the proposed site.

Upgradation of Patna and Gaya Airports

3185. KUMARI NIRMALA DESHPANDE: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the steps taken to encourage pilgrim tourism during this year of 2550the anniversary of Lord Buddha's Mahaparinirvana from the countries with large Buddhist population;

(b) whether there is any plan to upgrade the Patna and Gaya airports to facilitate the pilgrim travel; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Steps are taken to boost tourism at pilgrim places including Gaya from time to time based on the tourist forecast and availability of resources etc.

(b) Various development works like construction of new integrated Terminal Building, Car Park, apron, link taxiways, Isolation Bay and associated pavements with all modern amenities to cater to 500 passengers at a time have been taken at Gaya airport.

At Patna airport the work of extension of runway is subject to clearance for pruning of trees from State Government of Bihar. However, the existing Terminal Building at Patna airport is having peak hours capacity of 400 passengers at time with all modern facilities to meet the requirements of passenger/pilgrim traffic.

(c) Does not arise.

Air service between Dhaka and Guwahati

3186. SHRIMATI SYEDA ANWARA TAIMUR: Will the Minister of CIVILAVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Bangladesh is planning to introduce **a** new direct air service between Dhaka and Guwahati to boost the trade ties with the North-East;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the GMC Airlines of Bangladesh held discussions with officials of the Ministry to begin the service to North-East; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) No such information is available with the Government of India.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) No, Sir.